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February 13, 2009

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"Today, we are facing an economic crisis more serious than any since the Great Depression," said Rep. Melancon. "Last month alone, almost 600,000 Americans lost their jobs and unemployment in Louisiana has risen to 5.9%. With so many people hurting, we can't afford to sit back and wait for the perfect solution to come along. We must take bold action now to stop the downward spiral.

"The people of south Louisiana sent me to Congress because I promised to listen to them and do what I thought was right, not what was most popular or what my party told me to do. This plan, while far from perfect, will create or save an estimated 50,000 jobs in Louisiana, invest over \$538 million in infrastructure projects for our state, and lay a foundation for long-term growth for our country through innovation and education. This bill is the right thing to do for America's future, and I am proud to support it."

Leading up to today's vote, Rep. Melancon held a telephone town hall Monday night with his constituents in the Third Congressional District. Over 5,000 south Louisianians took part in the 90-minute conversation, and Congressman Melancon answered questions about the stimulus package from 26 constituents. Constituents can sign up for upcoming telephone town hall meetings on Congressman Melancon's website, www.melancon.house.gov (click on "Get Updates from Charlie" in the top right corner).

The jobs and economic recovery plan contains crucial investments for Louisiana to create jobs and boost the economy:

- Creating or saving an estimated 50,000 jobs here in Louisiana over the next two years, including 7,000 in the 3rd Congressional District (see attached table) ;
- Providing a Making Work Pay tax cut of up to \$800 for 1.7 million workers and their families in Louisiana, designed to start paying out immediately into workers' paychecks, as well as tax cuts to spur businesses large and small;

- Investing \$538.6 million in infrastructure for Louisiana, including \$429.9 million for modernizing roads and bridges, projects that will create jobs. This is the boldest investment since the creation of the interstate highway system a half century ago;
- Education for the 21st century, modernizing schools and making college more affordable with improved Pell Grants for the 109,817 Pell Grant recipient here in Louisiana and a higher education tax credit for 77,000 students in our state;
- Lowering health care costs and improving care by computerizing medical records, which will create hundreds of thousands of jobs, and helping those who cannot afford health care in these tough times;
- Helping workers hurt by the economy, including 121,900 of Louisianians that are out of work, those who have lost their health care, and seniors.

Rep. Melancon continued, **"As a vocal advocate for fiscal responsibility in government, I am very pleased the stimulus bill has strict accountability and transparency measures to help ensure that taxpayer dollars are spent wisely and effectively-including no earmarked projects and a new website at www.recovery.gov to allow Americans to track the investments."**

[Click here](#) for a fact sheet outlining in greater detail the Recovery Package's investments in tax relief, infrastructure, health care, energy, unemployment relief, education, and science and technology.

More information about the Recovery Package can be found online at: http://majorityleader.house.gov/members/econ_crisis.cfm

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